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## black british film and television



National Library

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16 + Source Guide



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# 16+ MEDIA STUDIES

## INFORMATION GUIDE STATEMENT

“Candidates should note that examiners have copies of this guide and will not give credit for mere reproduction of the information it contains. Candidates are reminded that all research sources must be credited”.

# BFI National Library

All the materials referred to in this guide are available for consultation at the BFI National Library. If you wish to visit the reading room of the library and do not already hold membership, you will need to take out a one-day, five-day or annual pass. Full details of access to the library and charges can be found at:

[www.bfi.org.uk/filmtvinfo/library](http://www.bfi.org.uk/filmtvinfo/library)

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10.30am - 5.30pm

If you are visiting the library from a distance or are planning to visit as a group, it is advisable to contact the Reading Room librarian in advance (tel. 020 7957 4824, or email [library@bfi.org.uk](mailto:library@bfi.org.uk)).

BFI National Library  
British Film Institute  
21 Stephen Street  
London  
W1T 1LN  
Tel. 020 7255 1444

[www.bfi.org.uk/filmtvinfo/library](http://www.bfi.org.uk/filmtvinfo/library)

The library's nearest underground stations are Tottenham Court Road and Goodge Street. For a map of the area please see:

[www.bfi.org.uk/filmtvinfo/library/visiting](http://www.bfi.org.uk/filmtvinfo/library/visiting)

# Accessing Research Materials

## Copies of articles

If you are unable to visit the library or would like materials referred to in this guide sent to you, the BFI Information Service can supply copies of articles via its Research Services. Research is charged at a range of hourly rates, with a minimum charge for half an hour's research – full details of services and charges can be found at:

[www.bfi.org.uk/filmtvinfo/services/research.html](http://www.bfi.org.uk/filmtvinfo/services/research.html)

For queries about article copying or other research, please contact Information Services at the above address or telephone number, or post your enquiry online at:

[www.bfi.org.uk/filmtvinfo/services/ask](http://www.bfi.org.uk/filmtvinfo/services/ask)

## Other Sources

### Your local library

Local libraries should have access to the inter-library loan system for requesting items they do not hold and they may have copies of MONTHLY FILM BULLETIN and SIGHT AND SOUND. Some recent newspaper items may be held by your local reference library. Larger libraries will hold other relevant materials and should offer internet access.

### Your nearest college/university

Universities may allow access to outside students, though you may not be able to borrow books or journals. Ask your reference librarian, who should be able to assist by locating the nearest college library holding suitable material. The BFI Film and Television Handbook lists libraries with significant media collections.

### Your school library

### Local bookshops

Some of the books mentioned in the bibliography will be in print and your bookshop should be able to order items for you.

### The British Library Newspaper Library

The Newspaper Library will have all the newspaper items referred to in this guide. Contact the library first if you wish to visit. 16+ students under the age of 18 will need to make an appointment.

### The British Library Newspaper Library

Colindale Avenue

London

NW9 5HE

Tel. 020 7412 7353

Email: [news@bl.uk](mailto:news@bl.uk)

[www.bl.uk/collections/collect.html#newsBL](http://www.bl.uk/collections/collect.html#newsBL)

# Approaches to Research

by Samantha Bakhurst

## Why do research?

You cannot simply rely on your existing knowledge when approaching essays in Media Studies. Although you will have some understanding of the area being explored, it is not enough to enable you to examine the area in depth. If you were asked to write about the people in your street in detail, you might have some existing information about names, faces, relationships, issues and activities but this knowledge would not offer you details such as every single one of their names, who knows who, who gets on with whom, how people earn a living, what has happened to them in the past and so on. This extra information could change your opinions quite dramatically. Without it, therefore, your written profile would end up being quite shallow and possibly incorrect. The same is true of your understanding of media texts, issues and institutions.

Before researching any area, it is useful to be clear about what outcomes you are hoping to achieve. Research is never a waste of time, even when it doesn't directly relate to the essay you are preparing. The information may be relevant to another area of the syllabus, be it practical work or simply a different essay. Also, the picture you are building up of how an area works will strengthen your understanding of the subject as a whole. So what outcomes are you hoping to achieve with your research?

A broad overview of the area you are researching: This includes its history, institutions, conventions and relationship to the audience. Research into these aspects offers you an understanding of how your area has developed and the influences that have shaped it.

An awareness of different debates which may exist around the area of study: There are a range of debates in many subject areas. For example, when researching audiences you will discover that there is some debate over how audiences watch television or film, ranging from the passive consumption of values and ideas to the use of media texts in a critical and independent way. Any discussion about censorship, for example, will be extremely shallow if you have no knowledge of these different perspectives.

Some knowledge of the work of theorists in the area: You need to demonstrate that you have read different theorists, exploring the relevant issues and investigating the area thoroughly in order to develop your own opinion based on acquired knowledge and understanding.

Information relevant to all key concept areas: You should, after research, be able to discuss all key concept areas as they relate to that specific subject area. These are the codes and conventions, representation, institutions and audience.

## Types Of Research

**Primary:** This is first-hand research. In other words, it relies on you constructing and conducting surveys, setting up interviews with key people in the media industry or keeping a diary or log of data (known as quantitative information) on things such as, for example, what activities women are shown doing in advertisements over one week of television viewing. Unless you are equipped to conduct extensive research, have access to relevant people in the media industry or are thorough in the up-keep of your diary or log, this type of research can be demanding, complex and sometimes difficult to use. Having said that, if you are preparing for an extended essay, then it is exactly this type of research which, if well used, will make your work distinctive and impressive.

**Secondary - printed sources:** This is where you will be investigating information gathered by other people in books, newspapers, magazines, on radio and television. All of these sources are excellent for finding background information, statistics, interviews, collected research details and so on. This will form the majority of your research. Some of these will be generally available (in public libraries for example); others such as press releases and trade press may only be available through specialist libraries.

**Secondary - online sources:** Online sources are also mainly secondary. You will need to be able to make comparisons between sources if you intend quoting online information, and to be wary of the differences between fact and opinions. Don't necessarily assume something is a fact because someone on a website says it is. Some websites will be "official" but many will not be, so you need to think about the authority of a site when assessing the information found on it. The structure of a website address (URL) can indicate the site's origin and status, for example, .ac or .edu indicate an academic or educational institution, .gov a government body, .org a non-profit organisation, .co or .com a commercial organisation. Websites sometimes disappear or shift location - make sure you can quote a URL reference for a site, and perhaps keep a note of the last date that you checked it.

**Other Media:** When considering one area of the media or one particular product or type of product, it is very important that you compare it with others which are similar. You will need to be able to refer to these comparisons in some detail so it is not enough to simply watch a film. You will need to read a little about that film, make notes, concentrate on one or two scenes which seem particularly relevant and write all of this information up so that you can refer to it when you need to.

**History and development:** Having an understanding of the history and development of the media text which you are researching will provide a firm foundation and context for contemporary analysis. There is a difference between generally accepted facts and how theorists use these facts.

**Theory:** This is the body of work of other critics of the media. Most of the books and periodical articles which you will read for research will be written by theorists who are arguing a particular viewpoint or position with regard to an issue within the media. It is this which forms the debates surrounding the study of the media, in which you, as a media student, are now becoming involved.

## Using Research

**Organising your research:** Before rushing headlong to the local library or web search engines, the first stage of research is to plan two things. When are you able to do your research and how are you going to organise the information gathered? You may, for example, wish to make notes under the headings listed above.

**Applying your research:** Always return to the specific questions being asked of the text. The most obvious pitfall is to gather up all of the collected information and throw it at the page, hoping to score points for quantity. The art of good research is how you use it as part of your evidence for an analysis of the text. The knowledge you have acquired should give you the confidence to explore the text, offer your own arguments and, where appropriate, to quote references to support this.

**Listing your research:** It is good practice, and excellent evidence of your wider reading, to list all references to secondary research, whether mentioned within the essay or not, at the end of your work.

References are usually written in this way:

1. Len Masterman, *Teaching About Television*, London, Macmillan, 1980.
2. Manuel Alvarado and Bob Ferguson, "The Curriculum, Media Studies and Discursivity", *Screen*, Vol.24, No.3, May-June 1983.

Other media texts referred to in detail should be listed, with relevant information such as the director, date of release or transmission, production company and, where possible, scene or episode number. Where you have compiled primary research, it is useful to offer a brief summary of this also at the end of your work.

# general references

## books

BOURNE, Stephen  
**Black in the British frame: black people in British film and television 1896-1996.**  
 London: Cassell, 1998.

Excellent book, readable account of some of the landmark events and notable persons involved in Black British film & television history. Very useful lists in the appendices.

ETHNIC MEDIA GROUP  
**Black who's who: a who's who of black achievers in Britain.**  
 London: Ethnic Media Group, 2000

Brand new title, lists persons nominated by New Nation and the Caribbean Times. Useful resource for identifying respected community leaders.

NOBLE, Peter  
**The negro in films.**  
 London: Skelton Robinson, 1948.

Very old, but worthy document of black entertainers on stage and film. Well-written, historical book is worth a look for those interested in early black film. Contains bibliographic references and film listings for the US, Britain and the Continent. Have a look at Appendix D on the controversy surrounding D.W. Griffith's *BIRTH OF A NATION*.

PINES, Jim and the BRITISH FILM INSTITUTE  
**Black and white in colour: black people in British television since 1936.**  
 British Film Institute, 1992.

The careers of Black performers and filmmakers stretching back to the '30s are revealed through interviews. Featuring Norman Beaton, Horace Ove and Lenny Henry.

SURREY SOCIAL & MARKET RESEARCH/ BRITISH FILM INSTITUTE

**The British Film Institute: Black and Asian film research.**  
 London: SSMR & BFI, 2000.

This current research project was undertaken to explore use and attitudes toward film, television and moving images amongst African-Caribbean and South Asian people of the UK. It also examined the relevant professionals' views about the current and future levels of participation by ethnic minorities in the UK film culture. This study was undertaken to coincide with the bfi's new Cultural Diversity Strategy. Both documents are available through the bfi's website.

## journal articles

**BHM: BLACK HISTORY MONTH**  
 October 1999, pp. 12-13

**Black take on film**, by Marsha Prescod

Quick overview of Black involvement in British film and television from the '50s onwards.

\* **BLACK FILM BULLETIN**  
 Vol.5/6 No.4/1. Winter/Spring 1997/98, pp. 5-8

**Black in focus**, by Onyekachi Wambu

Informative interview with Stephen Bourne on his research methods and aims when writing the key historical reference work *Black in the British Frame* (listed above). Bourne agrees with actress Carmen Munroe's opinion that British television was more adventurous in the 1960s than today in its depiction of Black characters.

\* **BLACK FILM BULLETIN**  
 Vol.5/6 No.4/1. Winter/Spring 1997/98, pp. 9-11

**Windrush – the hot ten**, by Stephen Bourne

To commemorate the fiftieth anniversary of the arrival of

African-Caribbeans to Britain on *The Windrush*, Bourne compiles annotated "ten best" lists in a number of categories covering the history of Black British film and television drama. *PRESSURE* takes best film, *A HOLE IN BABYLON* best TV drama.

**BLACK FILM REVIEW**  
 Vol.3. No.1. Winter 1986/87, pp. 12-18

**Young, British, and Black: the Sankofa Film and Video Collective**, by Coco Fusco

Lengthy interview with Martina Attille, a founder member of Sankofa alongside filmmakers Maureen Blackwood and Isaac Julien, concentrating on the collective's political *raison d'être*. Also includes discussion of the Sankofa production *THE PASSION OF REMEMBRANCE*. See also Fusco's book of the same name listed below.



# film references

## books

BURTON, Alan, O'SULLIVAN, Tim and WELLS, Paul eds.  
**Liberal Directions: Basil Dearden and postwar British film culture.**  
Wiltshire: Flicks Books, 1997.

See pages 59-88 and 162-171.

Contains a chapter on Dearden's films and others which engage the issues of race and homosexuality during the 50's and 60's. **SAPPHIRE** and **VICTIM** are looked at in depth. **POOL OF LONDON** is also analysed in a chapter of the same name.

GEVER, Martha, "Steve McQueen" in DODD, Philip & CHRISTIE, Ian  
**Spellbound: art and film.**  
London: Hayward Gallery/BFI, 1996.

See pages 93-99.

An interpretation of the work of video artist and 1999 Turner Prize winner, Steve McQueen. Contains comparisons to Isaac Julien and reference to Kobena Mercer's analysis of Black masculinity.

FUSCO, Coco  
**Young, British and black: the work of Sankofa and Black Audio Film Collective.**  
New York: Halliwalls/Contemporary Arts Centre, 1988.

An account of the work done by these two filmmaking collectives. Contains interviews with the leading filmmakers involved.

GIVANNI, June I. and the BRITISH FILM INSTITUTE  
**Black film and video list.**  
London: BFI Education, 1992.

Already pretty dated, it's a good document of what was available up to 1992, well organised sections and indices allow for cross referencing.

JULIEN, Isaac, MACCABE, Colin, HALLAM, Paul, and the BRITISH FILM INSTITUTE  
**Diary of a young soul rebel.**  
London: British Film Institute, 1991.

Contains introductions and diaries by the filmmaker Isaac Julien and the film's executive producer Colin MacCabe. With an interview between Julien and the American feminist writer bell hooks, and the screenplay from the film.

MALIK, Sarita, "The cinema of duty? The pleasures of hybridity: Black British film of the 1980s and 1990s" in HIGSON, Andrew's  
**Dissolving views: key writings on British cinema.**  
London; New York: Cassell, 1996.  
(Rethinking British cinema)

An explanation of black British filmmaking as an answering back, or cinema of duty. Malik goes on to discover the cinema of freedom and the individualised Black identity that grew from this.

MERCER, Kobena, "Diaspora Culture and the Dialogic imagination: The aesthetics of black independent film in Britain" in CHAM, Mbye B., ANDRADE-WATKINS, Claire  
**Blackframes: critical perspectives in black independent cinema.**  
Cambridge, MA: Celebration of Black Cinema Inc., 1988.

An analysis of the unique Black identity arising from British culture and some of Black independent film-

making techniques which subvert the norm of commercialism and auteurism.

MERCER, Kobena, and the INSTITUTE OF CONTEMPORARY ARTS  
**Black film, British cinema.**  
London: ICA, 1988.  
(ICA documents 7)

Papers presented in the ICA's conference in February 1988. "... cultural artefacts (such as film) do indeed shift and transform perceptions of ethnic and national identities."

PINES, Jim, "The Cultural context of Black British Cinema" in CHAM, Mbye B. ANDRADE-WATKINS, Claire.  
**Blackframes: critical perspectives in black independent cinema.**  
Cambridge, MA: Celebration of Black Cinema Inc., 1988.

Chapter about the emergence and recognition of Black filmmaking in Britain in which Pines concludes that the films of Black identity and culture need not be simply that of opposition.

ROSS, Karen  
**Black and white media: black images in popular film and television.**  
Cambridge: Polity Press, 1996.  
See pages 33-55

Well-written and interesting account of Black filmmaking in Britain, and the US. Ross makes many valid points and posits an exhibition strategy to increase Black British filmmaking.

SULICK, Sarah  
**Ethnic notions: towards a cinema of cultural diversity.**  
London: BFI Films, 1998.

A catalogue of films in the bfi's collections, this is a publication of select films from Britain's ethnic communities. It covers Africa, the US and Asia. Films and compilations available for hire on video are listed.



Earl Cameron in *Sapphire* (1959)

WAMBU, Onyekachi and ARNOLD, Kevin  
**A fuller picture: the commercial impact of six British films with black themes in the 1990s.**  
 London: Black Film Bulletin; British Film Institute, 1999.

Report and interviews produced for the New Futures for Black British Film Conference held at the NFT on October 23<sup>rd</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup>, 1998. With box-office revenues of the six films.

## journal articles

**BLACK FILM BULLETIN**  
 Vol.7. No.2. Summer 1999, pp. 3-4

**Are black films viable products for distributors?** by Carol Magdalene

Contrasting responses to the above question from distributors Robert Beeson of Artificial Eye and Clare Binns of Oasis Cinemas. Focuses on the issue from a business perspective.

**\* SIGHT AND SOUND**  
 Vol.8. No.9. Sept 1998, pp. 24-26

**A rage in Harlesden,** by Stuart Hall

Hall gives an in-depth analysis of BABYMOTHER and its roots in London's dancehall scene. He sees the depiction of dancehall culture as the most successful aspect of a film that utilises an unusual mix of stylistic approaches.

**BLACK FILM BULLETIN**  
 Vol.6. No.4. Winter 1999, p. 8

**A guinea a day; Stephen Bourne remembers the Black extras of the 1930s and 1940s whose exploitation in films promoting the British Empire and Nazi Germany were crucial to their survival,** by Stephen Bourne

Bourne again illuminates a "hidden history" of the British film industry.

**BLACK FILMMAKER**  
 Vol.1. No.3. 1998, pp. 8-9

**Windrush Special: a portrait of Earl Cameron,** by Linda Bellos

Profile of the actor whose career

spans more than fifty years and has included landmark roles portraying Black characters in British films of the '50s (including POOL OF LONDON, THE HEART WITHIN and SAPPHIRE). A filmography is listed.

**BLACK FILMMAKER**  
 Vol.1. No.1. Feb/Mar 1998, pp. 7-9, 12

**An interview with Julian Henriques talking about the making of Babymother, a musical financed by Channel Four and the lottery,** by Menelik Shabazz

Writer-director Henriques talks through the script's lengthy gestation, the film's production and some technical aspects of the filmmaking process.

**BLACK FILM BULLETIN**  
 Vol.5/6. No.4/1. Winter/Spring 1997/98, pp. 14-17, 43

**Windfall films,** by Helen Hughes

An overview of the lottery funding available to British filmmakers from a Black perspective. Ambiguity around the "commercial" aims of the lottery is seen by many as problematic when it comes to proper support for Black filmmakers. Includes interviews with representatives of the main lottery-funded consortia and responses from key figures in the Black filmmaking community.

**BLACK FILM BULLETIN**  
 Vol.5. No.2/3. Summer/Autumn 1997, pp. 28-30

**The full story,** by Carl Daniels

Interview with Paul Bucknor, who co-produced and initiated the concept for THE FULL MONTY. He explains that his original idea for the film featured a more multicultural group of characters.

**BLACK FILM BULLETIN**  
 Vol.5. No.1. Spring 1997, pp. 12-13

**Helen Hughes on Jean-Baptiste and British Screen,** by Helen Hughes

Brief report on the controversial decision by British Screen not to invite actress Marianne Jean-Baptiste to a British showcase

event at the Cannes Film Festival despite her Oscar nomination for SECRETS AND LIES. Jean-Baptiste comments "the old men running the industry [...] have got to come to terms with the fact Britain is no longer a totally white place."

**BLACK FILM BULLETIN**  
 Vol.4. No.1. Spring 1996, p. 2

Editorial, by June Givanni and Gaylene Gould

On the closure of the bfi's African & Caribbean Unit, which created the Black Film Bulletin, following a government funding squeeze.

**\* SIGHT AND SOUND**  
 Vol.5. No.2. February 1995, pp. 18-19

**Unwelcome; don't try to find excuses for Welcome II the Terrordome. Although it has been promoted as the first authentically independent black British film, it is unimaginably bad – and also politically repugnant,** by Paul Gilroy

Leading thinker Gilroy posits the film as not only artistically inept, but further as "fascistic" and potentially damaging to the Black cultural environment in Britain. His reading identifies "evident hostility" towards Black cultures and a superficial treatment of the histories of slavery, apartheid and the US civil rights movement.

**CINEASTE**  
 Vol.XXI. No.1-2. 1995, pp. 28-31

**Black Nationhood and the rest in the West; an interview with Isaac Julien,** by Roy Grundmann

Director Julien discusses his film THE DARK SIDE OF BLACK and the world of rap music it documents in terms of cultural and sexual identity. Also covering his other films LOOKING FOR LANGSTON and YOUNG SOUL REBELS.

**BLACK FILM BULLETIN**  
 Vol.1. No.1. Spring 1993, p. 11

**By any means necessary,** by Gaylene Gould

Brief bulletin on the methods being employed to fund WELCOME II THE TERRORDOME, which started

life as a 30 minute film graduation film and was developed into a feature with the backing of small private investors rather than institutional funding bodies.

**\* SIGHT AND SOUND**

Vol.1. No.4. August 1991, pp. 14-17

**Soul to soul**, by Amy Taubin

Isaac Julien is interviewed about *YOUNG SOUL REBELS* and its portrayal of Britain in 1977. The year is seen as a pivotal point in British cultural history, with national identity foregrounded by the Queen's Silver Jubilee and the Sex Pistols' controversial "God Save the Queen", and as "the moment in black British culture when you witnessed black style becoming a social force." Also includes analysis of the sexual relationships depicted in the film.

**\* SIGHT AND SOUND**

Vol.1. No.4. August 1991, pp. 17-19

**Threatening pleasures; how do the 1977 Jubilee, music, sexuality, politics and pleasure come together in *Young Soul Rebels*?** by Paul Gilroy, Stuart Hall and Homi Bhabha

In discussion, the three academics offer their insights into the cultural and political context of *YOUNG SOUL REBELS*. Ground covered includes the film's narrative structure and characterisation as well as broader theoretical debate.

**SCREEN**

Vol.29. No.4. 1988, pp. 114-118

**Black film-making in Europe**, by Maureen Blackwood and June Givanni

Survey intended to redress the American or African slant of most coverage of Black filmmaking by offering "basic source material" charting developments in Europe. Includes a breakdown of four territories (West Germany, France, Holland and Britain) with an emphasis on practical conditions and outlets available for the dissemination of work.

**FRAMEWORK**

No.26-27. 1985, pp. 2-9

**Territories; interview with Isaac Julien**, by Jim Pines

Julien considers his experimental documentary *TERRITORIES* that concerns itself with the problems of Black representation through the channels of the (White) British media. Includes a broader debate on the nature of a "British Black film culture."

**\* MULTIRACIAL EDUCATION**

Vol.9. No.2. Spring 1981, pp. 3-15

**Blacks in Films – The British Angle**, by Jim Pines

Substantial and weighty piece in which Pines seeks to outline "an historical account of race in British films." He looks in detail at *MEN OF TWO WORLDS* (1946) as an example of a colonial-based drama, highlights *SAPPHIRE* (1959) and *FLAME IN THE STREETS* (1961) as early British-based race dramas, and cites *PRESSURE* (1975) to exemplify drama about Black youth alienation. A framework is constructed to categorise the particular character types and plot constructions recurrent in "race" dramas. Television is also included within the analysis with particular reference to *EMPIRE ROAD* and 1970s broadcasters' concerns with the "immigration question". This may be of further use to the contemporary researcher looking at the context and terminology of these debates two decades on.

press articles

**INDEPENDENT ON SUNDAY (CULTURE SECTION)**

14 February 1999, p.3

**Young, gifted and criminally ignored**, by Andrew Gumbel

Insightful interview to publicise Marianne Jean-Baptiste's TV role as Doreen Lawrence in *THE MURDER OF STEPHEN LAWRENCE*. It focuses on the fact that this is her first major British role since *SECRETS AND LIES* because she has not been offered parts in comparison to her White counterparts such as Kate Winslet, and has felt the need to seek work in America. In relation to her role she talks

about Britain's insidious institutionalised racism and vents her frustration at her choice of roles being categorised by her skin colour.

**THE VOICE**

31 August 1998, p.21

**Vasta's good vibrations**, by Lee Pinkerton

Interview with Vasta Blackman about his acting roles in two recent films, *BABYMOTHER* and *LOCK, STOCK AND TWO SMOKING BARRELS*.

**THE VOICE**

14 September 1998, p.43

**Ghetto gorgeous**, by Lee Pinkerton

Interview with the star of *BABYMOTHER*, Anjela Lauren-Smith, about the lack of a Black film industry in Britain.

**EVENING STANDARD**

7 November 1997, pp. 25

**Lester does the rite thing**, by Michael Owen

An interview to initially publicise actor Adrian Lester's British film *UP ON THE ROOF* but it soon goes on to his upcoming lead role as an American in Mike Nichols's film *PRIMARY COLORS*. He gives his reasons for choosing the role over playing Othello in Sam Mendes' production at the National Theatre (the bigger audience). Lester also criticises novelty casting and says he prefers to work with directors for whom colour is not an issue.

**GUARDIAN**

15 May 1997

**Film star's snub is no secret**, by Dan Glaister

Article detailing Marianne Jean-Baptiste's outrage at being omitted from the list of young British actors invited to a Cannes celebration, despite her many award nominations for her performance in *SECRETS AND LIES*. All other invitees were White. Jean-Baptiste points out that she was the first Black British person to be nominated for an Oscar and this achievement has not been recognised.





Young Soul Rebels (1991)

#### THE VOICE

28 May 1996, pp. 31

**Marianne Jean-Baptiste makes an impact in Palme D'Or winner Secrets and Lies**, by Allister Harry

Piece where the writer expresses surprise at seeing a fully rounded Black character in a Mike Leigh film. Marianne Jean-Baptiste details her experience of working with Leigh both on SECRETS AND LIES and other projects and obviously has a great respect for him. She praises Leigh for being honest enough to admit to knowing nothing about Black culture and letting her get on with it in his infamous style.

#### GUARDIAN (SECTION 2)

19 January 1995, pp. 12-13

**A mirror of Britain**, by Farrah Anwar

Excellent piece which uses the release of WELCOME II THE TERROR-DOME as a springboard for a discussion of Black British Cinema and the cultural impact on it's viewers. It begins with a short interview with Ngozi Onwurah where she answers criticisms of exploitation but the film is given it's due as a landmark in British Cinema regardless of it's arguable faults.

The main body of the article asks various Black and Asian media celebrities which ethnic film made an impression on them. Notable names included are Isaac Julien, Farrukh Dhondy, Hanif Kureishi, Meera Syal, Trevor McDonald and Ngozi Onwurah herself. MY BEAUTIFUL LAUNDERETTE is frequently mentioned, but Dhondy is vociferous in his criticism of WELCOME II THE TERRORDOME'S cynicism. There is also a short list of essential Black films, not all of them British but all worth investigating.

#### GAY TIMES

August 1991, p.26-28

**Putting the record straight**, by Stephen Bourne

Interview with Isaac Julien about his new film YOUNG SOUL REBELS. Also examines his influences and the culture that formed his film-making agenda.

#### GUARDIAN

22 August 1991, p.24

**Soul pirates adrift in a sea of punk**, by Derek Malcolm

Review of YOUNG SOUL REBELS, winner of the Critic's Week Prize at Cannes in 1991.

#### INDEPENDENT

23 August 1991, p.14

**A murder most fair**, by Adam Mars-Jones

Review and critique of YOUNG SOUL REBELS.

#### NEW STATESMAN

23 August 1991, p.29-30

**Into a rare groove**, by Peter Keighron

Interview with Isaac Julien about YOUNG SOUL REBELS. Article considers the emergence of the US "black pack" of filmmakers and the spending power of Black film audiences. Julien compares the US experience to France and Britain.

# television references

## books

### CINEMA CITY

**Black people in British TV: soaps, serials and sitcoms.**  
Cinema City, 1988.

Publication that documents the festival held in Norwich during May 13-15, 1988. Contains introductory Articles by festival participants and industry professionals as well as reprinted journal references to the television programs featured in the festival.

COTTLE, Simon, and ISMOND, Patrick

**Television and ethnic minorities: producers' perspectives: a study of BBC in-house, independent and cable TV producers.**  
Aldershot, Hants: Avebury, 1997.

Interviews with television producers about programming from a Black perspective. Interesting and important differences between industry sectors pervade.

CUMBERBATCH, Guy, WOODS, Samantha, & the INDEPENDENT TELEVISION COMMISSION  
**Ethnic minorities on television: a report for the ITC.**  
London: ITC, 1996.

A study focusing on the frequency and types of roles which ethnic minorities portrayed in comparison to White programme participants during one four week sample period. Tables and statistics included.

DANIELS, Therese, GERSON, Jane, BRITISH FILM INSTITUTE  
**The colour black: black images in British television.**  
British Film Institute, 1989.

Dated, but it's a good reference for Black British television of the '70s and '80s. A document and critique of shows such as THE FOSTERS, KING OF THE GHETTO and EMPIRE ROAD.

### ETHNIC RESEARCH

**Media habits of ethnic minorities in the UK 1992.**  
Northolt, Middx: Ethnic Research, 1992.

Entirely made up of lists of tables and statistics relating to African-Caribbean and Asian media use. Somewhat dated, it is still a valuable source of raw data. Interesting views are expressed through numbers.

GIVANNI, June

**Remote control: dilemmas of black intervention in British film & TV.**  
London: British Film Institute, 1995.

Report from the Black & White in Colour Conference: Prospects for Black intervention in television, held at the ICA, November 1992. Contains papers presented.

## journal articles

**BLACK MEDIA JOURNAL**  
No.2. Spring 2000, pp. 62-63

**Lights, Camera, Action! African Caribbean and Asian people are inadequately represented in front of and behind the TV cameras. So what are the broadcasting companies planning to do about it?** by Naomi Marks

Details figures for the low representation of ethnic minority groups behind the cameras across all the major broadcasters. The new BBC training initiative intended to help rectify the situation is noted, but without government intervention hopes of major progress are not seen as high.

\* **BLACK MEDIA JOURNAL**  
No.1. Winter 1999, pp. 38-39

**Total Eclipse or More Fun? "The era of targeted programming is dead." So says, Yasmin Anwar, Channel Four's commissioning editor for multi-cultural programmes,** by Naomi Marks

As part of a special feature on Black access to broadcasting, Anwar outlines the case for Channel Four's belief that the

British audience is not a segregated society and that multicultural broadcasting should hence no longer be about making programmes aimed at niche 'minorities'. This stands in contrast to the BBC retaining its African Caribbean Unit. Includes quotes from other producers and the director of the Institute of Race Relations.

\* **BLACK MEDIA JOURNAL**  
No.1. Winter 1999, pp. 40-41

**The Colour of Commissioning,** by Trevor Phillips

Phillips relates the struggle for an independent producer, even of his status, to succeed in getting Black interest material commissioned by broadcasters. Refers to his productions WINDRUSH and BRITAIN'S SLAVE TRADE.

**BLACK FILM BULLETIN**  
Vol.7. No.3. Autumn 1999, pp. 3-4

**Stephen Bourne looks back at his involvement with Black and White in Colour, and wonders if the information the research team uncovered will ever see the light of day,** by Stephen Bourne

In addressing the under-documentation of the history of Black peoples' involvement in British TV, the Black and White in Colour project resulted in a two-part documentary of the same name. Bourne outlines his frustration that the files generated by the project (supported by the bfi and the BBC) are still not accessible to researchers.

**BLACK FILM BULLETIN**  
Vol.7. No.1. Spring 1999, p. 2

Editorial, by Carl Daniels

Commentary on a survey revealing that, although the percentages of ethnic minorities working in broadcasting are healthy, Black senior managers and lead actors are in short supply and White broadcasters are routinely being employed to cover Black issues.

**\* BLACK FILM BULLETIN**  
Vol.7. No.1. Spring 1999, p. 23

**Greater Expectations; Stephen Bourne asks why black actors are made invisible in historical dramas and adaptations of literary classics when there has been a black presence in Britain since the 1500s. Catherine Cookson's Colour Blind was a paltry exception, by Stephen Bourne**

Addresses the evident reluctance to cast Black actors in historical drama, with reference to Black theatre actors of previous centuries.

**BLACK FILM BULLETIN**  
Vol.6. No.4. Winter 1999, pp. 18-19

**Brothers and Sisters; soap, sex, drugs and more sex, by Carol Magdalene**

Critical review of the drama soap that, in a broadcasting environment short on Black drama, relied heavily upon sensationalism and sex.

**BLACK FILM BULLETIN**  
Vol.6. No.2/3. Summer/Autumn 1998, pp. 6-8

**Nurturing the talent: breaking the mould. Amma Asante: writer/producer of Brothers and Sisters converses with Magdalen Carol**

Asante remarks on the hectic production schedule of the first series of **BROTHERS AND SISTERS** and her experiences of the industry dating back to her days as a child actor.

**BLACK FILM BULLETIN**  
Vol.6. No.2/3. Summer/Autumn 1998, pp. 6-8

**The new multiculturalism, Yasmin Anwar in interview with Sarita Malik**

Anwar lays out her plans for Channel Four's Multicultural Department on her appointment as its commissioning editor.

**BLACK FILM BULLETIN**  
Vol.6. No.2/3. Summer/Autumn 1998, pp. 34-37

**At last the right stuff; Carl Daniels looks at Channel 4's black programme extravaganza, The Ba Ba Zee, by Carl Daniels**

Channel Four's season, billed as "a celebration and reflection of black life and culture around the world", is compared to BBC's **A-FORCE**. Includes reviews and brief credit details for titles shown.

**\* TELEVISION**  
Vol.35. No.6. August/September 1998, pp. 18-25

**Are there colour bars in a digital universe? Trevor Phillips, giving**

**the RTS Fleming Lecture, offers a penetrating analysis of British television's response, past and future, to a multiracial society, by Trevor Phillips**

Phillips broad-ranging lecture encompasses the social context of Black representation on screen and behind the

cameras in Britain.

**\* VERTIGO**  
No.7. Autumn 1997, p. 50

**Black square, white square; Jacquetta May, an occasional performer in EastEnders, asks if the nation's favourite soap washes a little too white...**

Jacquetta May – a member of Albert Square's Tavernier family in the early '90s – takes **EASTENDERS** producer Julia Smith's comment that "I hope people won't even realise [some new characters to the soap] are Bengalis" as symptomatic of the soap's shortcomings in addressing cultural differences and racism.

**BLACK FILM BULLETIN**  
Vol.4. No.3. Autumn 1996, pp. 5-8

**Reporting Black, Patrick Younge in interview with Onyekachi Wambu**

Younge (now multicultural commissioning editor at Channel Four) talks about his role in the development of the successful BBC current affairs series **BLACK BRITAIN**.

**BLACK FILM BULLETIN**  
Vol.4. No.3. Winter 1996, pp.13-14

**The perennial search for identity, Yasmin Anwar and Sarita Malik**

Two views on the thorny issue of whether there is a need for specialist ethnic broadcasting units, prompted by the disbanding of the BBC's Multicultural Programmes Department.

**BROADCAST**  
31 March 1995, p. 21

**Trix and treats; from mould-breaking sitcom Desmond's to multi-million-dollar Hollywood movies, Trix Worrell has proved minorities have mass-market appeal, by Andy Fry**

Interview covering writer and producer Worrell's career from his days at the National Film and Television School, with brief accompanying CV.



Love Thy Neighbour - ITV 1972-1976



**IMPACT**

No.2. January 1992, pp. 26-27

Multiculture Clash; has Channel 4's multicultural policy passed its sell by date? by Alkarim Jivani

Charts the history of specialist multicultural programming and questions its continued relevance.

**\* THE STAGE and TELEVISION TODAY**

2 December 1982, p. 18

**The case for and against providing programming for minorities,** Articles by Chris Dunkley and Jane Hewland

Financial Times TV critic Dunkley's notorious piece arguing that the contemporary move towards targeted programming for 'minority' groups represents "a new fascism" is reprinted here. It is accompanied by a response from Jane Hewland of LWT, the company who pioneered this type of broadcasting in Britain.

## press articles

**OBSERVER ('SCREEN' SECTION)**

19 September 1999, pp. 8-9

**Joking apart,** by Michael Collins

Article on the burgeoning career of Richard Blackwood as Channel Four's THE RICHARD BLACKWOOD SHOW is launched. Blackwood rejects the term "urban entertainment" to describe the show, calling it instead "a show for everyone". His career is charted via his time at MTV and the influence on his stand-up work of Black US comedians is discussed.

**EVENING STANDARD**

9 September 1999, p. 32

**The comic with a supermodel for a stepsister,** by Syrie Johnson

Interview with Richard Blackwood covering his relationship with stepsister Naomi Campbell, his Channel Four show and his further ambitions to succeed as a comic actor in Hollywood.

**TIMES**

21 June 1995, p. 23

**Does television paint Britain too white?** by Alexandra Freaan

Discussion about whether there are enough Black programmes and faces on British television. Farrukh Dhondy argues that there is too much sub-standard material already on our screens because of White liberal guilt, while TV producer Charlie Hanson argues that there is not nearly enough to serve inter-racial understanding. It is hardly an accident that Dhondy is Asian while Hanson is White. Trevor Phillips believes that the answer lies somewhere in the middle.

**THE VOICE (NOW)**

11 August 1992, p. 23

**Terry in charge,** by Deirdre Forbes

Article detailing the changeover to a Black director, Terry Jervis, for the second series of comedy sketch show THE REAL MCCOY. He argues that in a show of this nature Black people in the production team have the best understanding of what is needed to keep it relevant to the Black community.

**GUARDIAN**

24 October 1991, p. 38

**Changing the picture,** by Val Sampson

As DESMOND'S reaches it's four million viewing peak, this article covers the handing over of the baton from Trix Worrell to a new writing team including three Black women from different generations and backgrounds. During the course of the interview the Tavernier family in EASTENDERS come in for severe criticism from the female writers for being so inoffensively bland that their presence is pointless, they are the 'token Black family'. While DESMOND'S producer Humphrey Barclay argues that the viewing figures for the show could triple if it was given a peak time slot on a major channel and cites the success of THE FOSTERS as an example. All four dislike the idea of positive discrimination and want Black programmes made on merit.

**THE VOICE**

2 July 1991, p. 4

**McCoy: the real thing?** by Deborah Ward

Piece assessing the self-confessed patchy quality of the first series of THE REAL MCCOY. It is acknowledged as a good showcase for Black comedy talent but the humour is seen as juvenile. The producer Charlie Hanson defends this by admitting that the production was rushed to secure the show's peak time slot and that the second series would have time to rectify the shortcomings.

**TIME OUT**

8 May 1991, pp. 14-15

**Black box,** by Alkarim Jivani

A critique of THE REAL MCCOY that compares it to its American counterpart IN LIVING COLOR. Lenny Henry comments that home-grown Black talent is ignored but it should also open itself up to mixed audiences. There is a run-down of the show's origins (Lenny Henry's workshop for upcoming Black comedy writers, the need of the BBC to repair its poor track record for multicultural light entertainment). The general opinion of the show is positive but there is a criticism that it lacks the confidence to satirise Black icons unlike IN LIVING COLOR which had been very successful in this respect.

**SUNDAY TIMES**

29 October 1989, p. C5

**Crucial step for black comedy,** by Patrick Stoddart

Article publicising Lenny Henry's initiative for new Black comedy writers with the backing of the BBC, 'A Step Forward'. Trix Worrell comments that Black writers can write about things other than Black culture and the writer makes a salient point at the end that because of the dearth of Black British comedy performers they will mainly be writing for White performers.

**GUARDIAN**

5 January 1989, p. 24

**Lighter shades of black**, by Anne Caborn

Piece examining the dearth of Black sit-coms on British TV as *DESMOND'S* premieres on Channel 4. Past examples (good and bad) are briefly mentioned. Farrukh Dhondy, the channel's commissioning editor for multicultural programmes, attempts to find reasons for this sad situation admitting that there is a basic lack of good scripts but also blaming programme makers' reluctance to risk offending audiences, a view supported by the show's star, Norman Beaton. Beaton and the show's writer Trix Worrell compare the different purposes of *THE FOSTERS* and *DESMOND'S*, while the former introduced the Black community to the mainstream audience, the latter uses humour to examine the tensions within the community, especially between the generations. Worrell is convinced that *DESMOND'S* is only the beginning.

**NEW YORK TIMES**

13 March 1987, p. 19

**PLAYING AWAY, A Comedy**, by Vincent Canby

*PLAYING AWAY*, directed by Horace Ove, is seen as following in the tradition of British social comedies in its depiction of the culture clash at a cricket match between a rural Suffolk village and a team from Brixton. The reviewer feels that although the film "offers few surprises," it is well crafted and excellently acted.

**VARIETY**

23 July 1986, p. 33

**Ove's 'Playing Away' Addresses Britain's West Indian Communities**, by Jeremy Coopman

Brief piece from US trade paper on the cricket-themed *PLAYING AWAY* which notes that the film was fully funded by Film Four International who only offer partial funding to most projects. The film's producer expects it to go down well in cricket-playing territories, but hopes it may also pick up a US audience.

**VOICE**

19 July 1986, p. 28

**Playing Away**, by Tony Sewell

*PLAYING AWAY* is described by its producer Brian Skilton as "the biggest film commissioned by Channel Four and [...] perhaps the best black film to come out of England to date." Alongside a brief account of the film, there are quotes from director Horace Ove and star Norman Beaton.

**TODAY**

1 May 1986, p. 24

**No banner waving in the ghetto**, by Terry Baddoo

In this article Farrukh Dhondy defends himself against charges of stereotyping Blacks and Asians in his TV projects by arguing that these programmes need only to be entertaining not representational, and that British audiences are sophisticated enough to understand that. He also explains the axing of programmes *BLACK ON BLACK* and *EASTERN EYE*, saying their formats were being stretched to cover too many TV genres.

**GUARDIAN**

13 January 1984

**A corner in the black market**, by Colin Shearman

Excellent interview with Farrukh

Dhondy before his Channel 4 appointment which covers all the bases of the issue that is Black TV. It gives biographical details (Dhondy's Black Panther membership), writing credits (*NO PROBLEM*, popular forerunner of *DESMOND'S*) and his controversial views on several race and media topics. He argues that White writers don't have the intimacy to create realistic Black characters, reveals the still prevalent tokenism in media circles, and criticises TV executive Trevor Phillips for being afraid to take creative risks.

**GUARDIAN**

21 August 1979

**A hard look without the soft soap**, by Mike Phillips

An article examining the second series of *EMPIRE ROAD*. It covers much the same ground as the earlier *New Society* piece (see below) but is worth a look as it praises the increased sophistication of the show, both in the quality of the writing and the acting. There are also comments from the producer and one of the three new directors, a certain Horace Ove.

**NEW SOCIETY**

16 November 1978

**Taking race for granted**, by Margaret Walters

Excellent insightful essay about

*The Fosters* - ITV 1976-1977



the cultural impact of *EMPIRE ROAD*. It examines the show's soap opera/sitcom roots and its origin in a much darker, single play called *BLACK CHRISTMAS*. It is argued that in *EMPIRE ROAD* race is not treated as an issue, and therefore a problem, the characters are allowed to be three-dimensional. Illustrating this point, praise is given to Norman Beaton's lead performance which is initially comedic and larger than life but gradually becomes something much more subtle and complex as the series progresses.

#### DAILY MAIL

28 October 1978

#### The race is on! by Mike Phillips

Essay from Guyanese journalist that argues that the series *EMPIRE ROAD* presents the truth about immigrant life. Shows such as *LOVE THY NEIGHBOUR* are dismissed as presenting a fantasy view about the relationship between Blacks and Whites, while *EMPIRE ROAD* explores relationships within the community, especially the different expectations and aspirations of first and second generation immigrants. Special mention is given to Norman Beaton whose performance in the lead role is said to have the universal appeal of the Ena Sharples character in *CORONATION STREET*!

#### FINANCIAL TIMES

21 April 1976

#### THE FOSTERS, by Chris Dunkley

Critique of negative Black reaction to the all-Black comedy series using the same quotes from community leaders gathered in the earlier Daily Mail article. The writer seems to be asking why Blacks should escape the crass stereotyping that other social groups fall prey to in British comedy. He argues that the show's main crime is just not being funny. Interesting points, though there could be a hidden agenda here.

#### OBSERVER

11 April 1976

#### The Fosters, by Penny Toynbee

Negative review that accuses the show of being patronising, a sub-standard sitcom fobbed off onto talented Black actors to make Black people palatable to White audiences.

#### DAILY MAIL

10 April 1976

#### Frosty welcome for Fosters

The critical reaction from Black community leaders to the first episode of *THE FOSTERS*. The majority conclusion seems to be that the show was "insulting, cheap and stereotyped" but there is a warm reception from an 'ordinary' West Indian family who tell a Daily Mail Reporter that "it's just like us".

#### GUARDIAN

9 April 1976

#### Black comedy, by Carol Dix

Preview from the set of *THE FOSTERS* that premiered on British television that night. The piece emphasises that under its cosy exterior the show has a 'message', that Black people are just people too, rather than just being defined by their colour. But the writer has to acknowledge that the set crew are all White and that the scripts are actually anglicised versions of a Black American series *GOOD TIMES*, making the humour not specific to the Black British experience. The director defends this by saying that a Black writer is being drafted in to adapt the scripts. There is also a spirited defence of *LOVE THY NEIGHBOUR* by Norman Beaton, he argues that it generated work for black actors and was nearer to the truth of British race relations than liberals liked to admit.

# women's perspectives

## books

FOSTER, Gwendolyn Audrey  
**Women film directors: an international bio-critical dictionary.**  
Westport, CT; London: Greenwood Press, 1995.

Contains entries on Black British women filmmakers including Martine Attile, Maureen Blackwood and Ngozi Onwurah.

FOSTER, Gwendolyn Audrey  
**Women filmmakers of the African and Asian diaspora: decolonizing the gaze, locating subjectivity.**  
Carbondale, IL; Edwardsville, IL: Southern Illinois University Press, 1997.

See pages 24-42.

With a chapter on Ngozi Onwurah, the first British Black female filmmaker of a feature film (*WELCOME II THE TERRORDOME*, 1994).

YOUNG, Lola  
**Fear of the dark: "race", gender and sexuality in the cinema.**  
London; New York: Routledge, 1996.

A closer look at the role Black women play in films. Young analyses cultural themes and historical contexts in relation to the roles in which Black women are cast, and looks at the need for more screen-time for black women actors.

## journal articles

**BLACK FILM BULLETIN**  
Vol.6. No.2/3. Summer/Autumn 1998, pp. 9-10

**Staying power**, by Stephen Bourne

Interview with character actress Corinne Skinner-Carter whose credits include *EMPIRE ROAD*, *PRESSURE*, *BURNING AN ILLUSION* and *BABYMOTHER*.

**BLACK FILM BULLETIN**  
Vol.6. No.2/3. Summer/Autumn 1998, pp. 20-21

**Baby Mothers; babies, mothers, fathers and the dancehall**, by Leone Ross

Review of *BABYMOTHER* focusing on the film's depiction of female roles within the dancehall scene.

**BLACK FILM BULLETIN**  
Vol.6. No.2/3. Summer/Autumn 1998, pp. 22-23

**The Girl With Brains In Her Feet**, by Adeola Folarin

Review of film whose protagonist is an athletic teenager of mixed race growing up in Leicester in the '70s.

**\* BLACK FILMMAKER**

Vol.1. No.2. 1998, p. 12

**Secrecy and Lies; Stephen Bourne looks at the 'secret' history of black women in British cinema**, by Stephen Bourne

Bourne decries the quality of roles currently on offer to Britain's leading Black actresses in a short but apposite piece.

**BLACK FILM BULLETIN**  
Vol.2. No.2. Summer 1994, pp. 17-18

**A tale of transitions**, by Lincoln Pettaway

Interview with Ngozi Onwurah, director of *WELCOME II THE TERRORDOME*, in which she discusses the mixed race themes that recur in her work and what messages her work may signal to audiences.

**BLACK FILM BULLETIN**  
Vol.1. No.3/4. Autumn/Winter 1993, p. 26  
**Home from home**, (uncredited)

Maureen Blackwood is interviewed on her work and her position as one of the few Black female directors in Britain.

**BLACK FILM REVIEW**  
Vol.5/6. No.4/1. 1990, pp. 22-24

**Perfect Image**, by Elizabeth Jackson

Maureen Blackwood is questioned on her formative career and her film *PERFECT IMAGE*, on the occasion of the film being awarded Best Black Independent Film for 1989 by the Black Filmmakers Hall of Fame in California.

## press articles

**INDEPENDENT**  
19 January 1995, pp. 25

**Cinema these days – it's a riot**, by Kevin Jackson

Tough but fair review, praising *WELCOME II THE TERRORDOME*'s technical and entrepreneurial



*Welcome II The Terrordome* (1995)

inventiveness, but criticising the quality of the acting and screen-play.

#### TIME OUT

18-25 January 1995, pp. 61

**Future tense**, by Tom Charity

Ngozi Onwurah is interviewed as *WELCOME II THE TERRODOME* is finally released three years after its conception. She talks again about the long drawn out shoot that took up the previous three years and the independent financing from small investors within the Black community. Onwurah also talks about a controversial scene where a pregnant White woman is attacked by White thugs and miscarries her mixed race child and defends it by explaining it actually happened to a friend of hers. Finally Onwurah defends the extremity of the attitudes expressed in *WELCOME II THE TERRODOME* by arguing that the film is a warning of how bad race relations could get in Britain, not a call for separatism.

#### THE VOICE

13 April 1993, p. 24

**We're doing it our way**

Interview with the filmmakers on the set of *WELCOME II THE TERRODOME* focusing on the guerilla technique they used for financing the film which consisted of shooting the film when money came in and temporarily closing down the set when it ran out. It was the largest single fund-raising project by the Black British community at the time. Onwurah emphasises the commerciality of the film (citing the soundtrack) and reveals the real life events that inspired it.

#### THE VOICE

9 June 1992, p. 25

**Runaway success**, by Leone Ross

Interview with *WELCOME II THE TERRODOME*'s director Ngozi Onwurah that concentrates on her production company Non-Aligned and its body of work. Onwurah is scathing about the representation of Black women in Black films and argues that they have to make films for themselves to redress the balance.

## focus on personalities

### Norman Beaton

#### book

BEATON, Norman

**Beaton but unbowed: an autobiography.**

London: Methuen, 1986.

From Guyanan Calypso champion of 1956 to British film and television personality, this is Norman's version of his life and times.

#### journal articles

##### TV TIMES

29 April 1989, p. 14

**On the Beaton track**, by Ian Cotton

Beaton talks about coming to Britain from Guyana and his time as a school teacher in Liverpool.

##### TIME OUT

17 December 1986, p. 43

**The Beaton track**, by Jane Edwardes

Tracks the unusual byroads and financial mishaps of Beaton's life and career.

##### TIME OUT

2 October 1981, p. 23

**Triumph and disaster**, by Naseem Khan

On the contradiction between Beaton's acclaimed acting career and accounts of his checkered personal life.

##### \* TIME OUT

27 October 1978, pp. 14-15

**Empire Road: the series... the writer... the star**, by John Wvyer and Mike Philips

Details the background to the groundbreaking *EMPIRE ROAD* and its Birmingham setting, with profiles of Beaton and Michael Abbensetts, the writer the series.

#### press articles

##### THE VOICE

30 January 1996, p. 35

**Norman's conquests**, by Allister Harry

Preview of a tribute by Stephen Bourne to Beaton's television career as part of the 'Black on White TV' retrospective at the National Film Theatre in February 1996. The article argues that Beaton was pigeonholed in comedic roles and the tribute highlights his wide range of dramatic work. There are comments from Jim Pines and filmmaker John Akomfrah on the presence (or not) of Black drama on British TV.

##### THE VOICE

16 January 1996, p. 5

**Beaton's dying wish proves futile**, by Helen William

Article about the threat to an award, founded by Beaton to recognise the achievements of Black performers, due to lack of funds. The event had previously been sponsored by Channel 4 at the Birmingham International Film and Television Festival and had been won by Michael Abensetts, the writer of *EMPIRE ROAD*, and the actor Saeed Jaffrey.

##### THE VOICE

10 January 1995

**Rebel with a cause**, by Imruh Bakari

Piece discussing Beaton's career in the context of the 'tragedy' of his life and death, hours after returning to Guyana. It criticises the quality of the last series of *DESMOND'S*, stating it had become a mass of stereotypical clichés but praises Beaton's talent, dedication and success. It then goes on to contend that Beaton's large ego was probably his own worst enemy in dealing with how he was perceived by the arts establishment.



Norman Beaton (right) in *Desmond's* - Channel Four 1989-1994

#### THE VOICE

20 December 1994, p. 4

#### Beaton died surrounded by loved ones

Article relating the events surrounding Beaton's death, mainly notable for eloquent tributes from his co-star Carmen Munroe, Trix Worrell, the creator of *DESMOND'S*, and Farrukh Dhondy, Channel 4's commissioning editor for multicultural programmes, amongst others.

#### DAILY TELEGRAPH

15 December 1994, p. 21

#### GUARDIAN (Section 2)

15 December 1994, p. 17

#### INDEPENDENT

15 December 1994, p. 16

#### TIMES

15 December 1994, p. 21

Four obituaries from the broadsheets that together provide an excellent, detailed commentary on Beaton's life and career. Interesting tidbits include his Variety Club Best Film Actor award for *BLACK JOY*, his role in the creation of the Black Theatre of Brixton, a touching tribute from Humphrey Barclay, the producer of *EMPIRE ROAD* and his stint as a regional presenter at the BBC.

#### THE VOICE

9 June 1992, pp. 15-16

#### Beaton the retreat? by Ron Shillingford

Beaton talks about the popularity and cultural integrity of *DESMOND'S* but is surprisingly critical about *THE FOSTERS* citing the scripts as "not relevant to British Blacks". He also discusses his reasons for wanting to live in Jamaica rather than his home country Guyana (interesting in the light of the fact that he actually died in Guyana). Beaton also mentions the origins of his first acting role in a musical he wrote called *SIT DOWN BANNA*, apparently Kenny Lynch turned down the role of a pimp because he thought it wouldn't be good for his career!

#### INDEPENDENT ON SUNDAY (REVIEW)

15 July 1990, p. 17

#### Lynne Truss on Norman Beaton...

An interview to publicise a play which Beaton was appearing in at the time about a Trinidadian schoolteacher. He compares the subject matter of the play to his own educational background, both as a teacher himself and as a student, and talks about the importance placed on educational attainment by West Indian communities. The interviewer also contrasts Beaton's gregarious persona (and his past criminal convictions) with the perceived expectation of his behaviour as Britain's senior Black actor.

#### DAILY EXPRESS

3 November 1977

#### B'wana, it's so lonely up here, by Victor Davis

Dubiously titled interview with Norman Beaton around the time of his success with *THE FOSTERS* where he talks about the pressure of his responsibility as a Black role model, both as a father figure and as "Britain's only Black TV headliner". He also complains about the dearth of Black roles in British films and TV.

## Lenny Henry

### book

MARGOLIS, Jonathan, & HENRY, Lenny

#### Lenny Henry: a biography.

London: Orion, 1995.

From his humble beginnings doing impersonations for his mates in his hometown of Dudley, Lenny Henry went on to entertain both mainstream and alternative comedy circuit audiences before hosting *COMIC RELIEF* and starting his own television production company, Crucial Films.

### journal articles

#### \* BLACK FILM BULLETIN

Vol.2. No.2. Summer 1994, pp. 15-16

#### License dramatic, by June Givanni

Interview with Henry about the work of his production company Crucial Films and their role in creating Black drama, particularly short films.

#### PREMIERE (USA)

Vol.4. No.12. August 1991, pp. 32-35

#### White like me, by Ralph Rugoff

Article on Henry's Hollywood debut *TRUE IDENTITY*, in which his character plays half of the film disguised as a white man.



**EMPIRE**

No.18. December 1990, pp. 49-50

**Lenny Henry**, by Philip Thomas

Brief interview in which Henry discusses racism and his introduction to the working methods of Hollywood.

## press articles

**INDEPENDENT**

19 January 1994, p. 23

**Lenny gets down to some serious stuff**, by Steve Clarke

A detailed profile of Henry's production company Crucial Films and its past and ongoing projects (including the drama series *FUNKY BLACK SHORTS* that Henry wrote an episode of). It emphasises the Black perspective of much of its output and Henry is keen to point out that the Black community is very diverse, but also that the company is not a ghetto for Black issues.

**GUARDIAN**

8 November 1993, pp. 9-10

**The boy with the black stuff**, by Dave Hill

A month after the previous article, this critique of Henry's career to date is rather more even-handed. It obviously covers much of the same ground as the Independent on Sunday piece but praises Henry for evolving and maintaining his popularity through the changing cultural climate of the previous twenty years. We find out that two of his main influences are Richard Pryor and Bill Cosby, two artists seemingly at opposing ends of the comedic spectrum, and the writer argues that Henry's lack of anger doesn't necessarily make his work bland or indifferent, at least he is willing to take risks. The writer concludes that all of Henry's creative experiments are genuine and valid.

**INDEPENDENT ON SUNDAY**

10 October 1993, pp. 5-6, 8

**Do the right thing**, by Zoe Heller

Rather unsympathetic but in-depth interview and critique of

Henry's career, examining his talent for artistic re-invention. The writer seems to be constantly questioning Henry's motives and concludes that we are yet to see the real Lenny Henry. It returns to the old theme of Henry's ambivalence about the representation of Black people (citing the differences between his stand up act and his latest role in the TV show *CHEF*), and Henry states that it's deliberate on his part 'to shake things up'. The writer doesn't seem to think that this approach is working for his audience.

**GUARDIAN (WEEKEND)**

29 July 1989, pp. 19-20

**Stand up the real Mr Henry**, by David Newnham

Henry talks about the tightrope he walks between ensuring that his material is politically correct but is still funny. He admits that meeting his wife, Dawn French, and her Comic strip colleagues was a catalyst for his own social awareness but primarily his material has to satisfy him. He also compares British and American television's exposure of Black people (with examples) and argues that positive discrimination only works up to a point.

**NEW MUSICAL EXPRESS**

19 December 1987, pp. 28-29, 77

**Totally crucial**, by Paolo Hewitt

Another NME interview with Henry talking about his work for Comic Relief, his politicisation and the social issues covered by his character Delbert Wilkins. Henry uses the example of the BBC to bemoan the lack of Black people in the entertainment industry and admits that Delbert Wilkins may have lost some of his satirical edge but this was being worked on, and the character was still popular with the Black community. The writer obviously has mixed feelings about Henry, describing his work as hit and miss and implying that it sits on the fence politically.

**EVENING STANDARD**

2 October 1987, p. 14

**Lenny Henry shows the way for Britons**, by Steve Clarke

Article publicising the formation of Henry's production company, due to his frustration at the lack of decent acting parts offered to him. He criticises the trend for Black American actors to be cast in British roles because they are more bankable. In contrast there is also a brief mention of an art-house movie he appeared in called *THE SUICIDE CLUB* which premiered at the London Film Festival that year.

**NEW MUSICAL EXPRESS**

17 July 1982, pp. 15-17

**Come out fighting Lenny Henry**, by Lloyd Bradley

In-depth interview with Henry and critique of his impact on the Black British community, particularly young people. Henry talks about how his first gig in front of an all-Black audience made him radically rethink his material, after his primary experiences with mainly White cabaret audiences. It is clear he is very much seen as a torch-bearer for Black British comedy and he regards his characters as social commentators. Henry argues that there are so few Black British comedians because young Black people think it's uncool to laugh at themselves in public, but would gladly welcome the competition.

Lenny Henry



**SUNDAY TIMES**

7 February 1982

One man's brand of black comedy, by Gordon Burn

Intelligent critique of Henry's brand of humour, analysing his ambivalence towards his material and his audience, in relation to the Joshua Yarlong character. It covers his experience of playing to mainly white audiences and his intention to change that. The piece also concedes that Charlie Williams, famous for telling jokes about his colour, was Henry's only role model when he broke onto the national scene in *NEW FACES*, several years earlier.

**DAILY MAIL**

9 May 1981

**Young Rubber Face...**, by Charles Catchpole

Early interview with a naïve Lenny Henry where he states that he just wants to be seen as a "British comedian who happens to be Black" and has nothing to say about the race issue. He claims his jokes about colour are "anti-me not anti-race".

**CASE STUDY: Pressure**

(Dir. Horace Ové, 1975)

## books

PINES, Jim, and the BRITISH FILM INSTITUTE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT

**Representation and blacks in British cinema.**

London: BFI Education, 1991.

(BFI Education: Advisory Document pack)

An analysis of a few of the more important films in Black British cinema and how these films differ from what was being produced in America at the same time. Contains a brief analysis of Horace Ové's film *PRESSURE*.

RUGG, Akua

**Brickbats and bouquets: black woman's critique, literature, theatre, film.**

London: Race Today Publications, 1984.

An interesting document of Black presence on stage, in film and literature, and on television during the '70s and early '80s. Mostly written in review by a contributor to *Race Today*, it is a dated but useful document of the Black British cultural renaissance. Contains commentary on Horace Ové's *PRESSURE*.

## journal articles

**BLACK FILMMAKER**

Vol.1.No.4. December 1998, pp. 12-13

**Horace Ové; living with Pressure,** by Imruh Bakari

The director of *PRESSURE*, recognised as the first British feature film made by a Black director, talks about the constrictions of working in Britain and his subsequent work in the Caribbean.

**\* BLACK FILM BULLETIN**

Vol.4. No.2. Summer 1996, pp. 16-21

**Horace Ové; reflection on a thirty year experience,** by June Givanni

Ové talks at length about his life and career. He refers to *PRESSURE*

as being based on two things: the struggle of a family leaving the West Indies to start a new life in Britain and the struggle of the first generation of children born in Britain to West Indian parents.

**MONTHLY FILM BULLETIN**

Vol.54. No.647. December 1987, pp. 361, 384

**Going to meet the man,** by Sylvia Paskin

Brief piece in which Ové refers to his work within the context of racism in Britain. Includes filmography and short biographical notes.

**FILM (BFFS)**

Vol.2. No.64. August 1978, p. 6

**Horace Ové,** by Clive Hodgson

Ové talks about a number of his films.

**MONTHLY FILM BULLETIN**

Vol.45. No.531. April 1978, p. 68

**Pressure,** by David Wilson

Credits, synopsis and review of the film on its UK release. Wilson notes that *PRESSURE*'s "achievement is to have so persuasively incorporated within its narrative format a set of options which succinctly characterise the position of blacks in Britain."

**LISTENER**

2 March 1978, p. 280

**The Grove Family,** by Gavin Millar

Review of *PRESSURE*.

**TIME OUT**

17 February 1978, p. 10

**Ultimate Pressures,** by Paul Taylor

Taylor dissects the reasons behind the often commented-upon delay between the film's production and its release, defending the BFI against charges of suppressing the film and of incompetence.

## press articles

**THE LEVELLER**

No.20. November 1978, pp. 31-33

**Camera wrangles: Horace Ove**

Extensive interview with PRESSURE's director from an independent filmmaking angle. It covers his early life including his negative experience of trying to get a job at the BBC, a rundown of his projects up to, including, and after PRESSURE and his version of the film's problems at the BFI. Ove also talks in general about his experiences as a Black filmmaker, (how he struggles with others' perceptions of the subjects he can cover) and the lack of encouragement in Britain at that time for Black creativity.

**SPECTATOR**

4 March 1978

**Clancy Sigal**

An article by an American writer that uses a review of the film as a springboard for a brief discussion on the lack of recognition of Black Britishness he had noticed in this country. The review itself is fairly complimentary but criticises the filmmakers for their inconsistent treatment of the leading character's brother, a political activist. At first he is portrayed as a hypocrite but then becomes his brother's saviour. The reviewer compares PRESSURE to BLACK JOY and THE HARDER THEY COME which were not afraid to show the negative aspects of their leading characters.

**SUNDAY TIMES**

19 February 1978

**Alan Brien**

Another good review heralding the film as the first of a British New Wave, regardless of its colour bias. It focuses on the Britishness of the film's young, Black lead character and the cross-tensions portrayed within the Black community, and then goes on to echo Derek Malcolm's appraisal (see below) of the non-judgemental portrayal of the white working class characters.

**GUARDIAN**

16 February 1978

**Derek Malcolm**

Very positive review stressing the significance of the film both to the bfi, and British cinema in general as Britain's first Black feature film. PRESSURE is praised for its timeliness, technical polish and performances by its mixture of professional and amateur actors. Malcolm also takes on board the filmmakers' thesis that both Blacks and Whites are exploited in British society and finds it believably portrayed.

**SUNDAY TIMES**

29 January 1978

**Putting on Pressure, by Philip Oakes**

Takes up the story of the film's distribution problems almost two years later, this article repeats

many of the complaints of the earlier Sunday Times piece (see below) and then goes on to relate the final resolution (PRESSURE's producer Robert Buckler handling the changeover of distribution rights himself).

**DAILY MAIL**

4 September 1976

**Unseen film, by Horace Ove and Robert Buckler**

In the wake of the Notting Hill riots, a letter to the Mail from the film's director and producer criticising the bfi's failure to properly distribute PRESSURE so that it could reach its intended audience, the general public. Political reasons are suggested though the filmmakers insist that the film does not take sides but just charts the causes of racial conflict.

**SUNDAY TIMES**

18 July 1976

**Pressure point, by Philip Oakes**

Article detailing the organisational mishandling of the film's distribution by the BFI after having financed its production. The original budget and legal wrangling over rights are included.





## dvd availability

The following titles were commercially available on video and/or DVD in November 2007. Please note that titles may have been awarded an '18' certificate by the British Board of Film Classification.

**BABYLON**

Duration: 95 minutes  
Region 0  
Raro Video (2007)

**BLACK JOY (1977)**

Certification: 15  
Duration: 95 mins  
Region: 2  
Cat. No: FHED1844(FREMANTLE HOME ENTERTAINMENT)

**BURNING AN ILLUSION**

Certification: tc  
Region: 2  
Cat. No: BFIVD525(BFI VIDEO PUBLISHING)

**DANCEHALL QUEEN**

Certification: 15  
Duration: 96 mins  
Region: 2  
Cat. No: PALM7637  
(PALM PICTURES)

**DESMOND'S (SERIES 1)**

Certification: PG  
Duration: 144 mins  
Format: DVD  
Region: 2  
Cat. No: C4DVD10183  
(CHANNEL 4 DVD)

**LENNY HENRY: SO MUCH THINGS TO SAY – LIVE**

Certification: 15  
Duration: 109 mins  
Region: 2  
Cat. No: 8235293(UNIVERSAL PICTURES VIDEO)

**LENNY HENRY: IN PIECES**

Certification: 12  
Duration: 222 mins  
Region: 2  
Presentation: Widescreen  
Aspect Ratio: 16:9 Wide Screen  
Cat. No: 0927455902(WARNER VISION INTERNATIONAL)

**MONA LISA**

Certification: 18  
Duration: 99 mins  
Region: 2  
Cat. No: PWD4007(ANCHOR BAY ENTERTAINMENT)

**PRESSURE/BALDWIN'S NIGGER**

Certification: 15  
Duration: 164 mins  
Region: 2  
Cat. No: BFIVD714(BFI VIDEO PUBLISHING)

**THREE OF A KIND [featuring Lenny Henry]**

Vols. 1, 2 & 3  
Certification: PG  
Duration: 120 mins  
Region: 2  
Cat. No: CCTV30190(CINEMA CLUB)

**YOUNG SOUL REBELS**

Certification: 18  
Duration: 100 mins  
Format: DVD  
Region: 2  
Cat. No: IPD10892(ILC PRIME)

